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Written statement* submitted by First Modern Agro. Tools - Common Initiative Group (FI.MO.AT.C.I.G), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 August 2018]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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Please recycle

"De facto" statelessness of the anglophone Linguistic Minority in Cameroon

The main contention in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon lies with the nationalities of the Anglophone linguistic minority in Cameroon, which is ineffective. Anglophone nationals or names in Cameroon are easily identified in government offices and their dossiers treated by the majority francophone government officials like second class citizens at the public service, the military, recruitments in government and nominations to positions in government.

The law is clear and impartial but those in position of authority are mainly the francophone majority in Cameroon who do not follow the letter of the law.

In public life Anglophones are marginalized and discriminated by the majority francophone government officials to the highest level in government. This is evident in the gradual eradication of the English culture in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon, such as the eradication of the Anglo-Saxon system of education and the common law.

A francophone minister has likened the union between the Anglophones and the francophone people in Cameroon to a cube of sugar that is dropped in a basin of water. Ministers have also claimed an Anglophone is not fit to rule the country. This is not politics but marginalization.

The application of nationality laws on the Anglophone linguistic minority in Cameroon is partial, competent Anglophone officials are not allowed to work in their own regions, instead incompetent colonial francophone authorities are employed in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. They do not master the common law of the Anglophone linguistic minority and these usually lead many Anglophone nationals into problems with the police and civil administrators.

Cameroonian nationality is granted based on links through families or through territory, place of birth, parents who are Cameroonians and habitual resident in Cameroon, it is the practical aspect on how the Anglophone linguistic minority is treated that is important.

In trying to bring out the root causes of the statelessness in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon and the specific conditions or barriers that result to the statelessness of the Anglophone linguistic minority in Cameroon we would like to briefly say that the root causes of the Anglophone linguistic minority in Cameroon is the referendum or independence of 1961 where west Cameroonians or Anglophone linguistic minority were not permitted to achieve self-independence, followed by a unilateral change of a referral decision in 1972. The two-state federation of francophone people and the Anglophones in Cameroon was unilaterally changed to a republic of Cameroon to the detriment of the Anglophone linguistic minority.

Moreover the centralized nature of Cameroonian unitary state makes things more difficult for Anglophones when they must travel far to the central region for official follow up of documents. Resources in the local community in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon are controlled by the central government. This is unacceptable. This problem is further compounded by the long term 37-year rule of sit-tight president Paul BIYA.

The Anglophone crises in Cameroon have proven beyond all reasonable doubts that the Anglophone linguistic minority in Cameroon have a serious problem. 160,000 refugees are in Nigeria, thousands have lost their lives, homes and public buildings have been burnt down, crops are destroyed mainly by the military. Government officials and others have been kidnapped; thousands of people are missing while others are in prison, the Cameroonian government has chosen war instead of inclusive dialogues to solve the Anglophone crises, salaries of workers of the second employer in the country (CDC) situated in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon have not been paid for the last three months; this is to punish the Anglophone linguistic minority for revolting. Guinness products have been withdrawn from the Anglophone regions of Cameroon and unwanted brasseries products imposed on the Anglophone linguistic minority. It is important to note that ending the crises without solving the Anglophone problem is meaningless, because the crises would arise again in the coming years even if the government uses the gun to end them today.

Many have recommended several solutions to the Anglophone linguistic minority "de facto statelessness" including:

-Cessation or separation of southern Cameroon from la republic du Cameroon.
-The re-establishment of a two-state federation.
-Permitting an Anglophone also become head of state in Cameroon.
-Compensation of Anglophones with something for not asking a third question at independence and for the unilateral change of a referral decision at the detriment of the Anglophone linguistic minority.

-The employment of pure English speaking Cameroonians in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon just with a few French speaking Cameroonians. French speaking Cameroonians should not dominate in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon.
-The re-establishment of an Anglo-Saxon system and culture in all aspect in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon.

-The best solution remains for President Paul BIYA to step down after 37-years of his rule. If President Paul BIYA refuses to step down, then he should be militarily removed by the joint military action with France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America at the front. The best time for this to happen is now, to pave the way for free and fair presidential elections in less than two months from now (October this year 2018).